



Operation Iraqi Freedom Observations

Marine Corps Warfighting Lab
Liaison to I MEF



Three Wars



- OIF I – I MEF and V Corps
- OIF I Phase IV – SASO
- OIF II – Insurgency





OIF Aftermath



- Marines in non-doctrinal roles conducting nationbuilding
 - Reserve forces bring exceptional skills to the table
 - Need to understand not only people and religion, but also business culture and governmental structures
 - Judicial system
 - Is it really the military role?



Stability and Support Ops



- I MEF prepared for stability and support operations intensely for four months prior to deployment for OIF II





I MEF Cultural Training



- Arabic language training for over 300 Marines
 - Linguists assigned to units
 - Language translation devices
 - Pointy-talky cards
- Cultural-intelligence information cards
- Required reading list
 - 48 articles with commander's comments
 - Historical literature on the region
- Intense exercises with cultural scenarios interwoven
- General Mattis spoke to every battalion
- “No Better Friend. No worse enemy.”
 - Respect for the Iraqi people.



The Threat

- Identifying and defeating the insurgents
 - Petty criminals
 - Big-time crime
 - Foreign Fighters
 - Insurgents



Flashpoints

- Security
- Water
- Sanitation
- Health/Medicine
- Fuel
- Electricity
- Education
- Unemployment at 60-70%
- Inflation





The Fallujah Brigade



Fallujah:

- Pop: 250 - 500,000
- Sunni Wahabi Muslim
- Located 35 miles west of Baghdad in the heart of the Sunni Triangle.

Fallujah

Jolan area

“You bought him. You own him.”



Information Operations



- Fallujah
 - Two audiences
 - Al Jazeera
 - Al Jazeera is kicking our butt!
 - Number of satellite dishes
 - Mosques
- Abu Gharib
 - Releasing criminals
 - Losing support at home
- The “Wedding Party”



Quote by an Iraqi Mother: “He watches cartoons until 11 p.m. unless the power goes off. His grades have already dropped. It’s a problem.”



The Iraqi People



- Sunni, Shia, Kurd, Bedouin?
- Religion
- Tribe, clan, sheikh, sub-sheikh
- Mosul, Baghdad, Basra
- Fallujah, Ramadi, Husaybah, Al Qaim
- **The family unit!**





Quote of the Day



- 15 May:

“What we have to remember is that while everybody could be the enemy, not everybody is the enemy.”

Captain Jason Smith, 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment





Other Cultures



- Political -- Military
- Coalition Forces
- Non-Governmental Organizations
- Private Voluntary Organizations
- Contractors
- Other regional players





Are We Making a Difference?



- Iraqis at the airport.
- Husaybah happened because Marines were making a difference.
- Civil Affairs teams.
- I MEF Engineer Group – Seabees
- What are the MOEs?
 - Non-confrontational contacts with Iraqis
 - Iraqi Security Forces trained and equipped



The Challenge



- Border guards and customs officials
 - The 14 month plan
- Iraqi Security Force Commander in Ramadi
- Assassinations, kidnappings, murders
- Security and stability
- Child in Husaybah playing with Improvised Explosive Device



Your Military



- **Innovative and imaginative**
- **Company commanders are training, equipping, paying Iraqi Security Forces**
- **Burial party**
- **Marine at Fallujah PX**

IT'S THE PEOPLE



Quote of the Day



- “You've got NBA players who stub their toe and they're out for a whole season, but a Marine gets shot in the head and he's back at the front line in 10 days.”



Grunt Vs Aviator



